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Farm Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture Office of Public Affairs Radio-TV Division Washington D.C. 20250 (202) 447-4330
Letter No. 2527

Oct. 11, 1991

WHAT'S COOKING IN SCHOOL LUNCH? Secretary of Agriculture **Edward Madigan** has invited Members of Congress and the news media to attend an Oct. 16 observance of National School Lunch Week on Capitol Hill. In addition to showing examples of innovative dishes school cafeterias are now serving around the country, USDA will also demonstrate new approaches to nutrition education, including "**Nutrasaurus Rex**," a human-sized dinosaur character used by schools in San Bernardino, Calif., to help teach lessons in diet & nutrition. **Contact: Phil Shanholtzer** (703) 756-3286.

USDA TV ON NEW SATELLITE -- WESTAR 4 satellite is scheduled to be replaced by **GALAXY 6** satellite at 2 a.m., EDT, Nov. 2, 1991. Hughes-Galaxy, the satellite owner, says the change should result in only minor interruption to 24-hour-services. The USDA service scheduled for Saturday, Nov. 2, should **not** be affected. We've been told that those who down link USDA TV feeds will find the Saturday morning feed at the same location in the sky only on a new, more-powerful, satellite. The transmission days and times will remain the same. The transponder, 12D, and channel 23, also remain the same. Just the name of the satellite changes. **Contact: Lynn Wyvill** (202) 447-4330.

PHONE NUMBERS TO CHANGE OCT. 28 -- A "heads up" notice -- nearly all the phone numbers at USDA headquarters will change their prefix on Monday, Oct. 28. The old 447-prefix will be replaced by 720-. USDA Radio-TV's main number will change, for example, from (202) 447-4330 to (202) 720-4330. USDA Radio's Newsline will **not** change; that number will continue to be (202) 488-8358/59. So, if your call doesn't go through dialing the old number, try changing the prefix to 720-. Good luck!

PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL ON RURAL AMERICA -- The President's Council on Rural America, created to advise President **George Bush** on how the federal government can improve rural development policy & programs, is currently holding a series of meetings across the country. The meetings with state & local government, farm, business & education leaders will examine rural-development policies & ways to strengthen economies in areas throughout rural America. Council chair is **Winthrop P. Rockefeller**. The schedule of remaining meetings includes: Oct. 16, **Sioux Falls, S.D.**; Oct. 23, **Springfield, Ill.**; Oct. 25, **Huntington, W. Va.**; Oct. 29, **Sacramento, Calif.**; Nov. 7, **Binghamton, N.Y.**; Nov. 14, **Santa Fe, N.M.** "National policy can be effective only if it addresses problems at the local level, and supports local initiatives in solving those problems," Rockefeller says. "The leaders we meet are our best source for advice to President Bush on policy requirements, and how federal agencies can most effectively assist states and communities in strengthening local economies." **Contact: Thom Rubel** (202) 447-2261.

ALEX THIERMANN NAMED U.S. CODEX COORDINATOR -- Alex Thiermann has been named U.S. coordinator for Codex Alimentarius Commission activities. Thiermann is deputy administrator for international services with USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. The Codex commission, which is sponsored by the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Health Organization, sets international food hygiene and other standards to protect public health and promote free trade. Thiermann began his USDA career in 1979 as an animal health researcher. He has authored more than 40 scientific publications and received his doctor of veterinary medicine from the University of Chile at Santiago and a Ph.D. in microbiology and immunology from Wayne State University, Detroit, Mich. **Contact: Jim Greene** (202) 832-0314.

MEXICAN MANGOES GET HOT WATER BATH -- Mangoes entering the U.S. now get a hot water bath developed by USDA scientists to make sure they don't carry hidden pests. "It's really just an enormous hot tub," says **Nathaniel 'Nat' Perry**, with USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service in Guadalajara, Mexico. Perry supervises the certification & operation of over 50 hot-water treatment facilities. "We dip maturing mangoes in hot water. The heat penetrates the fruit and kills any fruit flies hidden inside. After that, the mangoes finish ripening as they are transported to grocery stores and markets," Perry says. **Contact: Estella Bock** (301) 634-5271 or **Janna Evans** at 110-525-520-4551.

OLDER WOMEN'S SPINES GET 'SUNSHINE' -- Older women can increase spine bone by getting more of the "sunshine vitamin" -- vitamin D -- along with extra calcium during the short & gloomy days of winter, a new USDA study found. "We find that postmenopausal women living in the temperate zone benefit from increasing their vitamin D intake to about 500 International Units daily," says study leader **Bess Dawson-Hughes**. From May to October, she says, exposure to sunshine prompts the skin to make enough of the vitamin, which helps the body absorb calcium & phosphorus from the diet & deposit the minerals in bones. **Contact: Bess Dawson-Hughes** (617) 556-3064.

MUSHROOM PROGRAM? USDA is seeking comments on proposals to establish a promotion, research & consumer information program for mushrooms. The program is authorized by the Mushroom Promotion, Research, and Consumer Information Act of 1990, part of the 1990 Farm Bill. **Daniel D. Haley**, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, says the proposals are that the program be administered by a council and that the council members would be nominated by the mushroom industry and appointed by the secretary of agriculture. This is the method used in existing research & promotion programs for other ag commodities. **Contact: Rebecca Unkenholz** (202) 447-8998.

*Editor: Marci Hilt Phone: (202) 447-6445
(720-6445 after Oct. 28!)*

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1792 -- Sugar cane growers in the Everglades are turning to a cover crop of rice to help reduce erosion. On this edition of **Agriculture USA**, **Brenda Curtis** talks with producers in South Florida who are also planting a rice crop for a number of reasons. (Weekly reel -- 13-1/2 minute documentary.)

CONSUMER TIME #1274 -- Healthier babies as a result of WIC; music of the night; Halloween alternatives; satisfying the Japanese taste for beef; protecting our farmland. (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 to 3 minute consumer features.)

AGRITAPE NEWS & FEATURES #1782 -- USDA News Highlights; hearings for rural America; protecting farmland; U.S. apple exports; U.S. farm exports. (Weekly reel of news features.)

NEWS FEATURE FIVE #1441 -- Chinese pig test; tobacco budworm control; pheromone blocker; Easter Island flies; cockroach control. (Weekly reel of research feature stories.)

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Mon., Oct. 21, ag outlook, trade update, catfish production, world livestock situation; Tues., Oct. 22, weekly weather & crop update, dairy outlook, cattle on feed; Wed., Oct. 23, rice outlook, poultry production; Fri., Oct. 25, livestock poultry update. **(These are the USDA reports we know about in advance. Our Newsline carries many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup. Please don't let the lack of a story listing keep you from calling.)**

DIAL THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINES (202) 488-8358 or 8359.

Material changed at 5 p.m., EDT, each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION NEWS SERVICE

FEATURES -- **Pat O'Leary** reports on the pumpkin outlook; **Lynn Wyvill** reports on year-round turkey; University of Missouri's **Mike Thomas** reports on diversifying ag using different grains & Michigan State University's **Dave Luciani** reports on making improvements in football field turfgrass.

ACTUALITIES -- USDA meteorologist **Norton Strommen** on the latest weather & crop information; USDA economist **Dave Harvey** on aquaculture outlook; USDA economist **Ron Gustafson** on livestock & poultry update; USDA economist **Merritt Padgitt** on impact of drought on irrigated acres & USDA economist **Barbara Claffey** on supplies of meat, cotton, feedgrains, soybeans & cranberries.

UPCOMING FEATURES -- **DeBoria Janifer** reports on innovative recipes for the school lunch program & **Pat O'Leary** reports on a national consumers' week quiz.

EVERY OTHER WEEK -- **Agriculture Update**, five minutes of USDA farm program information in "news desk" format with B-roll.

Available on Satellite Westar 4, Transponder 12D (Channel 23), audio 6.2 or 6.8:

Thursdays from 7:30 - 7:45 p.m., EDT, **Saturdays** from 10 - 10:45 a.m., EDT, and **Mondays** from 8 - 8:45 a.m., EDT.

OFFMIKE

HARVEST RESULTS...varied considerably reflecting drought conditions, says **Owen Davis** (Michigan Farm Radio Network, Lansing). Southern section of the state is dry and returns were skimpy, but producers in the northern half reported the best harvest in 10 years. County fair coverage has been completed for the year. Owen says attendance was higher, as well as at the state fair.

WINTER WHEAT PRODUCERS...in Washington state are concerned about germination problems caused by prolonged dryness, says **Bob Hoff** (Northwest Ag News Network, Spokane). Some are planting in dust & hoping for rain. Apple harvest went well, good crop & good prices. Bob says a major issue next year will be the Commerce Department's decision on water levels required to protect salmon in the Columbia & Snake Rivers. If the levels are dropped, irrigation systems will need expensive alterations, & barge traffic could be halted during salmon runs. Bob says no consensus among user groups has been announced.

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Office of Public Affairs
Radio-TV Division
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D.C. 20250-1300

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DISASTER ASSISTANCE...has been a leading story generating response from listeners, says **Gary Kinnett** (WIAI, Danville, Ill.). Following broadcast of a series of programs, over 500 farmers contacted the station to list 300,000 corn & soybean acres impacted by the drought. Gary also provided information for producers on options to bankruptcy, remaining in business while addressing debt.

MOVED...**Kurt Wiggers** from WJIL, Jacksonville, Ill., to KMON Great Falls, Mont. **Karla Krengle** from WMDT-TV, Salisbury, Md., to WGAL-TV Lancaster, Pa., as producer of the Farm Report. **Allen Baker** has assumed duties for farm programming at WNCT Greenville, N.C., replacing **David Spatola** who has returned to Wisconsin.

THANKS...to **Larry Steckline** (Mid America Ag Network, Wichita, Kan.) for sending material from the USSR taped during his coverage of **Secretary Madigan's** fact finding trip.

VIC POWELL

Chief, Radio & TV Division